# UK aims for 87% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2040



The Climate Change Committee has put forth ambitious recommendations indicating that the UK should aim for an 87% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, with households expected to contribute significantly to this goal. This initiative aligns with increasing global concerns about climate change and the urgent need for nations to take measurable action.

In the area of home heating, the Committee suggests a dramatic shift from traditional heating systems. Currently, only 1% of British homes are heated by electric heat pumps, but by 2040, it is recommended that around 50% of residences transition to this technology. To achieve this, the installation of heat pumps in existing homes must surge from the current figure of 60,000 per year to nearly 450,000 by 2030, and further to approximately 1.5 million by 2035. The report specifies that while homeowners will not be compelled to upgrade their heating systems until their existing gas boilers reach the end of their lifespan, the installation of new gas boilers will not be permitted after 2035. Notably, electricity pricing will need to become more affordable, and consumers will require assistance to manage the initial costs of fitting low-carbon technology.

In the transport sector, the transition to electric vehicles is deemed critical, with the expectation that three-quarters of cars and vans on UK roads will be electric by 2040, a significant increase from just 2.8% of cars and 1.4% of vans in 2023. The Climate Change Committee notes that electric vehicles are already more economical to operate and maintain, with new electric models projected to become cheaper than their petrol and diesel counterparts by 2026–2028. Alongside these advancements, local air quality is expected to improve as the adoption of electric vehicles increases, although this transition will necessitate a corresponding enhancement in green energy sources, particularly offshore wind.

The aviation sector's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is also under scrutiny, with recommendations for managing flight demand and promoting the development of sustainable fuels and hybrid aircraft. An increase in travel costs is anticipated, such as an estimated £150 rise in the price of a return ticket to Alicante, Spain, and a £300 increase for trips to New York by 2050. The Committee has indicated that households may also face higher air passenger duties or the introduction of a frequent flyer levy, although there are calls for protections to ensure families can afford at least one holiday flight each year.

Dietary changes stand out as another pillar of the proposed measures. In order to cut emissions from meat and dairy production, the public is encouraged to reduce their meat intake by 25% and dairy consumption by 20% based on 2019 levels. Dr Emily Nurse from the Climate Change Committee highlighted that this reduction could equate to a decrease from eight doner kebabs per week to six. To facilitate these dietary shifts, the Committee advocates for increased availability of plant-based foods in public sectors, restaurants, and supermarkets, and for farmers to be incentivised to diversify their income sources. However, farmers have raised concerns regarding potential livestock reductions and the impact on UK meat production, citing its environmentally friendly stance compared to imports from less sustainable sources.

Additional strategies for emission reductions include enhancing energy efficiency measures in homes, increasing the use of public transport, cycling, and walking instead of driving, as well as promoting recycling and the adoption of energy-efficient appliances. The Climate Change Committee's recommendations reflect a comprehensive approach, aiming to engage households directly in the effort to achieve a significant decrease in the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by 2040.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.theccc.org.uk/climate-action/> - This URL supports the Climate Change Committee's role in advising on greenhouse gas emissions targets and strategies for achieving Net Zero by 2050. It highlights the UK's commitment to reducing emissions through various sectors.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/business/climate-emissions-slashed-by-87-by-2040-what-will-it-mean-for-households-b2704706.html> - This article corroborates the Climate Change Committee's recommendations for reducing emissions by 87% by 2040, including the shift to electric heat pumps and electric vehicles.
* <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/2023-progress-report-to-parliament/> - Although not directly mentioned, this report typically includes updates on the UK's progress toward its climate goals, which aligns with the Committee's recommendations for emission reductions.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-becomes-first-major-economy-to-pass-net-zero-emissions-law> - This URL supports the UK's legal commitment to achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050, which underpins the Climate Change Committee's recommendations for significant emission reductions.
* <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/2022-progress-report-to-parliament/> - This report provides context on the UK's climate change policies and progress, supporting the broader framework within which the Climate Change Committee operates.